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DEPARTMENT FOR AF SPG  
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SUBJECT: SPLM ROLLS OUT BROAD DARFUR PLAN AND REQUESTS DONOR FUNDS

REF: KHARTOUM 476

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Summary  
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11. (SBU) The SPLM has developed a multi-track plan to effect resolution of the Darfur crisis. Though lacking in operational detail, the plan includes having SPLM representatives visit rebel groups and civil society in all three Darfur states, working with the NCP to develop a GNU approach to the Darfur issue before the next round of peace talks, engaging other countries in the region on Darfur, and holding a negotiation capacity-building workshop in Juba for Darfur rebel movements. The SPLM has requested donor funding for outstanding bills from "Juba I" in the amount of USD 1.32 million and financing up-front for "Juba II" in the amount of USD 1.36 million. While the SPLM--with donor support-- should focus on strengthening its ground operations and outreach in Darfur, the USG should consider modest funding for a Juba II initiative if the SPLM secures the participation of SLM/Abdulwahid and JEM representatives, pending UN/AU plans to organize security consultations between Sudan and the Darfur rebel movements. End summary.

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Multi-Track Approach  
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12. (SBU) Minister for Presidential Affairs Luka Biong Deng and Darfur Taskforce Member Dr. Priscilla Joseph briefed assembled diplomats on the SPLM's ongoing Darfur rebel outreach and the party's efforts with respect to the crisis in Darfur on April 3. The SPLM is moving along a multi-track approach: a visit by the Darfur Taskforce to rebel groups and civil society in all three Darfur states; development of a GNU approach to the Darfur issue before the next round of peace talks, in coordination with the NCP; engagement with other countries in the region on the Darfur conflict; and a negotiation capacity-building workshop in Juba for Darfur rebel movements. "Juba II," tentatively slated for June or July, will focus primarily on capacity building in advance of peace talks. (Note: In the absence of a UN/AU timetable for resumption of negotiations, it is unclear how the SPLM settled on this timing. End note.)

13. (SBU) Per their strategy document, the SPLM's four-tiered approach is as follows:

1A. Mobilize civil society in Darfur and northern Sudan for peace through meetings, rallies and workshops;

1B. Hold consultations with the NCP to create a GNU "common understanding" of the process that will bring peace to Darfur;

1C. Engage in "diplomatic activity" on the Darfur problem by visiting

neighboring states (Egypt, Eritrea, Chad, and Libya); and

1D. "Coordinate and facilitate all of the activities that are related to the Darfur conflict and the quest for peace."

14. (SBU) In support of the first objective, SPLM Chairman Salva Kiir Mayardit will visit Darfur to meet with IDPs, SPLM members, DPA signatories, and other political parties to support this process, according to the SPLM. Ten SPLM Darfur Taskforce Members will also visit the three states of Darfur over a period of two weeks. The Taskforce will later invite approximately 50 Darfur rebels to a negotiation capacity-building workshop to be held in Juba over a period of two weeks. The total estimated cost for all of these activities is USD 1,362,000. Joseph, responding to a question from UNAMID, noted that the Taskforce will provide the Juba-based donor/diplomatic corps with a more detailed proposal the week of April 7. (Note: The SPLM has discussed Kiir's visit to Darfur since January of 2007. Post continues to urge the SPLM leadership to organize such a visit, which would be Kiir's first, in order to jump-start SPLM efforts to increase its credibility in the region. End note.)

15. (SBU) According to the Taskforce, the NCP has agreed to the SPLM request for Darfur to receive stand-alone treatment as a sub-committee within the SPLM/NCP Executive Committee talks. The "Darfur subcommittee" within the ExecComm talks includes six individuals, with Deputy Secretary General (and Darfur Taskforce Chairman) Abdelaziz Helou representing the SPLM and Presidential Advisor Nafie Ali Nafie representing the NCP. The SPLM is pressing for the development of a common position with the NCP on the Darfur crisis before the next round of peace talks.

16. (SBU) Although they are focused primarily on matters impacting CPA implementation, the SPLM increasingly regards Darfur as an

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impediment to the CPA's consolidation, and deteriorating Chad/Sudan relations have become "a new front setting the SPLM back." While the SPLM's efforts were viewed warily by the NCP initially, Deng said "they now understand that our agenda is peace." Moreover, Joseph noted, including Darfur on the Executive Committee agenda keeps the issue at the forefront of talks between the parties. "Anticipation and uncertainty surrounding the upcoming census, as well as the SPLM and NCP's ongoing discussions on border demarcation have also put the issue of Darfur on the backburner at the Presidency," said Joseph.

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Abdulwahid Shift?  
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17. (SBU) Minister Deng claimed that the SPLM Deputy Secretaries General Yasser Arman and Helou's March visit to Paris to speak with Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) leader Abdulwahid al Nur was a breakthrough for two reasons: Abdulwahid is now open to allowing his people to discuss unification with other movements in Juba, and there is a shift in his thinking that minimum security, as opposed to maximum security, must be in place in Darfur before he will participate in peace talks. Deng said that the SPLM was committed to continuing the dialogue with Abdulwahid in order to bring him closer to the negotiating table. (Note: Abdulwahid first revealed his position on minimum versus maximum security as a prerequisite to negotiations during a meeting with UN Envoy Jan Eliasson in January. Post has no independent confirmation that Abdulwahid has agreed to send representatives to Juba, though two of his key field commanders have denied this assertion. End note.)

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Donor Funding Request  
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18. (SBU) The SPLM representatives discussed the party's outstanding bill for "Juba I." According to Joseph, they anticipated hosting 50 rebels for two weeks, but 250 rebel representatives ultimately joined in the talks and spent over four months in Juba. At least eight Darfur rebels remain in Juba. Joseph said the outstanding

costs are due to lengthy hotel stays, movement of rebels from the diaspora to Juba, rebels' medical bills, rebels' communication in the field through the use of satellite phones, and the transportation of rebels to meetings. Outstanding costs from Juba II total USD 1,326,488. (Note: The mushrooming of rebels in Juba during Juba I resulted from inadequate coordination within the SPLM on invitations to the Darfur movements. End note.)

¶9. (SBU) Dutch and Norwegian donors were critical of the SPLM's over-expenditures. The Dutch said that they cannot assist with past activities but could contribute to future activities. The Norwegians urged the SPLM to negotiate hotel bills in advance for the second round of workshops to be held in Juba. Poloff asked if the SPLM had shared its new strategy document and outstanding and future financial requests with the UN/AU. Joseph responded that the SPLM had not spoken with the UN/AU about the strategy document or the estimated costs of USD 1,362,000 but would set up a meeting with the UN/AU in the next week to discuss. Minister Deng asked the donors to share the strategy and financial requests with their host capitals and "see what they could do with it (the financial requests)."

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Comment  
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¶10. (SBU) Comment: The main success of the Juba I discussions was the consolidation of several rebel movements under a Zaghawa-dominated umbrella group, the United Revolutionary Front (URF), announced on April 8. The other major rebel movements--SLA/Unity, the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), and SLA/Abdulwahid--have expressed limited interest in participating in "Juba II" discussions hosted by the SPLM. Given the upcoming elections, the SPLM should focus on strengthening its ground operation in Darfur to reach out to the people of the region and build momentum for its message of transformation in Sudan (Reftel) and the bulk of donor funding to the SPLM on Darfur should support this effort. However, if the SPLM is able to convince representatives from SLA/Abdulwahid and JEM to attend a meeting in Southern Sudan, the USG should consider funding for a limited number of key Darfur rebel leaders to convene in Juba, in coordination with UN/AU plans to hold consultations with Sudan and the rebel movements on security arrangements in late April or early May.

FERNANDEZ